

Message Text

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ACTION IO-13

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E.O. 11652: N/A
TAGS: ECOSOC
SUBJECT: COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES; ITEM 4, WATER CONFERENCE

REF: UN DOCUMENT (WATER CONFERENCE) E/CONF 70/CBP/4

1. ON MAY 9, THE COMMITTEE HEARD AN ORAL REPORT ON THE WATER CONFERENCE BY ITS SECGEN, YAHIA ABDEL MAGEED. MAGEED STRESSED THE IMPORTANCE OF FOLLOWUP ON THE NATIONAL, REGIONAL AND INTERNATIONAL LEVELS. HE REVIEWED THE CONFERENCE'S DECISIONS ON FINANCING AND ON SHARED WATER RESOURCES. HE CALLED FOR STRENGTHENING THE LEADERSHIP OF UNDP RES REPS AND FOR STRENGTHENED SECRETARIAT SUPPORT FOR THE COMMITTEE ON NATURAL RESOURCES (CNR) AND A REEVALUATION AND REORIENTATION OF THE RELATIONSHIP BETWEEN ECOSOC AND THE CNR ON ONE HAND AND THE VARIOUS UN AGENCIES AND SPECIALIZED AGENCIES DEALING WITH WATER ON THE OTHER. MAGEED SUPPORTED THE CALLING OF A SPECIAL SESSION OF THE CNR ON WATER CONFERENCE FOLLOWUP. MAGEED WAS FOLLOWED BY LISTER, SECRETARY OF THE ADMINISTRATIVE COMMITTEE ON COORDINATION (ACC), WHO EXPLAINED THE ACC PROPOSAL FOR A NEW INTERAGENCY WATER RESOURCES BOARD (IWRB).

2. THE UNITED STATES DELEGATION LED GENERAL DEBATE ON THE ITEM ON MAY 10 DRAWING ON POSITION PAPERS FOR UNCLASSIFIED

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ITEMS 4 AND 8 (TEXT BEING POUCHED TO KAHN, IO/IEP).
MOST SPEAKERS WERE FROM DEVELOPED COUNTRIES, EAST AND WEST, WITH ONLY 3 INTERVENTIONS AMONG G-77 COUNTRIES, WHO ARE VERY SCANTILY REPRESENTED ON THE COMMITTEE.
CONCLUSIONS OF THE DEBATE WERE SUMMARIZED BY THE CHAIRMAN. THEY WILL BE REFLECTED IN THE REPORT, WITHOUT ANY SPECIFIC DECISIONS OR RESOLUTIONS. THESE CONCLUSIONS

WERE AS FOLLOWS:

A. FULL CONSENSUS ON IMPORTANCE OF WATER CONFERENCE FOLLOWUP, ON THE IMPORTANCE OF REGIONAL ACTIVITY AND COORDINATION, AND ON THE CENTRAL ROLE OF CNR AND ECOSOC.

B. WIDE SUPPORT FOR A SPECIAL SESSION, WITH DECISION TO BE TAKEN AT ECOSOC. (SOME DELEGATIONS RESERVED UNTIL ECOSOC; THERE WERE DIFFERENCES ON TIMING, WITH SOME SEEKING AN EARLIER DATE.)

C. AGREEMENT ON NEED FOR INTERAGENCY COORDINATION, BUT ONLY PARTIAL AGREEMENT WITH ACC PROPOSALS. MANY DELEGATIONS REQUESTED MORE INFORMATION AND FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS; MANY STRESSED THE NEED FOR USING EXISTING STAFF. (SOCIALIST COUNTRIES WERE MOST OPPOSED; MANY WESTERN DELEGATIONS, INCLUDING UK AND FRG, TOLD US THEY WOULD HAVE GONE ALONG WITH PROPOSAL, BUT WERE QUITE WILLING TO PUT OFF DECISION IN VIEW OF SKEPTICISM OF U.S., ITALY AND OTHERS.)

THE DISCUSSION WAS ENTIRELY NON-CONFRONTATIONAL.

3. IN A FOLLOW-UP ON MAY 11, LISTER GAVE AN ELABORATION OF THE ACC PROPOSAL WHICH WENT LITTLE BEYOND THE RATIONALE GIVEN IN PARA 234 OF REF DOC. HE NOTED THAT THE NOVELTY OF THE PROPOSAL WAS IN NEW TERMS OF REFERENCE, A SPECIAL STAFF (BUT SMALL), AND THE PROPOSED INFORMAL TASKS FORCES, AND DENIED ANY CLAIM OF AUTONOMY.
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HE ALLOWED IT WAS UNLIKELY THAT A FULL ELABORATION OF THE PROPOSAL, COMPLETE WITH FINANCIAL IMPLICATIONS, AND TAKING INTO ACCOUNT THE RESULTS OF THE RESTRUCTURING EXERCISE, COULD BE READY BEFORE NEXT YEAR. (IN EFFECT, LISTER'S REMARKS COORDINATED WITH USG VIEW THAT THE QUESTION OF SECRETARIAT COORDINATION BE TAKEN UP AT THE PROPOSED SPECIAL SESSION OF CNR.) SORENSEN

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